

### A Memory of the Franco-Prussian War.

In the little church-yard of an old-fashioned French hamlet, as most French hamlets are, stands, amid the surrounding graves, a solitary cross, on which hangs, in spring and summer, an often-renewed wreath of flowers, supplemented in autumn by garlands of many-colored leaves, and when the snows of winter render the pure silence of the cemetery, more pure and silent still, a carefully treasured wreath of immortelles is produced from the innumerable wrappings which have protected it during the summer, and, placed by a pair of withered hands, tireless in this labor of love, upon the arm of the shapely cross that stands alone, in its little inclosure, marking no grave, yet sacred to the memory of one whose story I am about to relate to you. The trembling feet that make a daily pilgrimage to the spot, the loving fingers that arrange and rearrange the flowery offerings, the tearful eyes that never cease weeping at the foot of the sacred emblem, are those of Mother Gabrielle, the widow of Raoul, the old blacksmith of Sante-Marie Aux Mines.

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Lory, Raoul Lory, was out of sorts. Usually, the forge-fire extinguished, he was wont to sit on the bench by the door, enjoying the well-earned repose which follows a busy day, and, the apprentices dismissed, he would drink a couple glasses of beer, in great, long draughts, divided by mature and sensible reflections on the day's labors and possible profits. But this evening the good man remained in his shop until his wife came to call him to supper, and then he went reluctantly.

As she looked at her husband, Mother Lory thought, "What is the matter with him? Perhaps he has heard some bad news from the regiment—something he does not like to tell me. What if the boy should be ill?"

But she did not dare to ask him, knowing his humor, and was forced to content herself with quieting the three little brunettes, with black, luxuriant hair, who were making merry around the table as they ate their black bread and sweet butter, and crunched the salad of radishes and lettuce, flavored with crisp, young onions.

As the blacksmith handed his plate to be served, he said angrily:

"Ah! the beggars! the poltroons! the villains!"

"Pray, of whom are you speaking?" inquired his wife.

"Of five or six rascals in French uniforms, who have been seen in town since morning, arm in arm with Navarros, swearing and drinking like cowards, as they are. Ragamuffins—sneaks, who have chosen to be Prussians! Ah, how can we honest men ever endure to look at those false Alsations? What poison is vile enough to be given them to drink?"

"Do not be so hard on them, my dear man," said his wife. "It is not all their fault, poor boys. It is a chance for them between Algiers and the colonies. They are homesick, no doubt, and the temptation to return was great. Everyone does not like to be a soldier."

"Hush, mother! hush, I tell you! You women know nothing—you hear nothing. Always at home with the children, you love them as the animals do their young. Beyond plenty to eat and drink for them, and their warmth and comfort, you care nothing. I repeat—they are beggars, poltroons, renegades, and if ever it should come to pass that our Christian should so disgrace himself, as sure as my name is Raoul Lory, and that I served seven years with the French *chasseurs*, I would cut him in two with my sabre," and half-rising in his imaginary rage at the absent Christian, he shook his fist at the picture of a young Zouave,